

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (GARBLE LINE ONE PARA EIGHT)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, FR, TUR

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM - NATO EXERCISE DEEP EXPRESS
(S/S NO. 7515672)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM LOWENSTEIN THROUGH HARTMAN AND
SONNENFELDT

1. GENERAL HAIG HAS NOTED POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH THE
FORTHCOMING EXERCISE, DEEP EXPREYS, SCHEDULED FOR TURKISH
THRACE AND THE AEGEAN SEA IN SEPTEMBER (TOSEC 080180). HE
ESTIMATES THAT, ALTHOUGH THE GREEKS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN
PLANNING FOR THIS EXERCISE AND THEIR TECHNICAL OBJECTIONS
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HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, GREECE WILL CONTINUE TO
OPPOSE THIS EXERCISE. HE ALSO NOTES THAT TURKEY HAS BEEN
ADAMANT SO FAR ON HOLDING THIS EXERCIS, AND CONCLUDES
THAT THE ISSUE IS LIKELY TO SURFACE AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL

AND WILL REQUIRE A FUNDAMENTAL DECISION -- "EITHER TO CARRY OUT THE AEGEAN PORTION OF THE EXERCISE AGAINST GREEK OPPOSITION, WITH POSSIBLE ULTIMATE COSTS ACCRUING IN GREEK ATTITUDE AND APPROACH TO RETURNING TO THE MILITARY PART OF NATO; OR, CANCEL THE EXERCISE WITH THE POTENTIAL OF FURTHER ALIENATION OF TURKEY, BY GENERATING WHAT PROBABLY WOULD REPRESENT THE FIRST TURKISH/NATO CONFRONTATION SINCE THE U.S. AID WAS TURNED

OFF." FOLLOWING ARE OUR ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

2. THE PROBLEM. A NATO LAND, SEA AND AIR EXERCISE, DEEP EXPRESS, WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE AEGEAN AND TURKISH THRACE, SEPTEMBER 12-28, INVOLVING NATO'S ACE MOBILE FORCE AND INCLUDING, AMONG OTHER U.S. ELEMENTS, A MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT OF 1,800 MEN WHICH WILL PARTICIPATE IN AN AMPHIBIOUS LANDING ON TURKISH SOIL. GREECE WOULD CLEARLY PREFER THAT THE EXERCISE BE CANCELLED, ALTHOUGH GREEK OBJECTIONS TO DATE HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED ONLY TO PORTIONS OF THE EXERCISE AND ON A TECHNICAL LEVEL. TURKEY HAS SO FAR BEEN ADAMANT ON HOLDING THIS EXERCISE, AND INCLUDING TACTICAL AIR OPERATIONS WHICH WILL POSE LIKELY EMBARRASSMENT FOR PARTICIPATING ALLIED FORCES BECAUSE OF GREEK AIR RESTRICTIONS. WE NEED YOUR GUIDANCE ON WHETHER TO PERMIT THE EXERCISE TO PROCEED, LETTING GREECE OR OTHER ALLIES BE THE ONEY TO CALL FOR CANCELLATION OR MAJOR CHANGE; TO SEEK CANCELLATION OF THE EXERCISE; OR TO TRY TO SCALE BACK THOSE ASPECTS PARTICULARLY OBJECTIONABLE TO THE GREEKS.

3. BACKGROUND. DEEP EXPRESS WAS NOTED IN DECEMBER 1974 BY THE DPC AS ONE OF HUNDREDS OF NATO EXERCISES SCHEDULED FOR 1975. IN EARLY JULY, SHAPE DECIDED THAT THE EXERCISE SHOULD CONTINUE AS PLANNED; AND NATO'S MILITARY COMMITTEE IMMEDIATELY ADVISED THE NAC THAT THE EXERCISE COULD HAVE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. WE CONCURRED WITH USNATO'S RECOMMENDATION TO HOLD OFF ON ANY INITIATIVES TO CHANGE
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THIS EXERCISE UNTIL AFTER DISCUSSION IN THE NAC IN LATE JULY AFFORDED GREECE THE CHANCE TO POSE OBJECTIONS, SHOULD IT WISH TO DO SO. IN THAT CASE, WE ENVISAGED COORDINATING OUR VIEWS WITH OTHER ALLIES (AND LETTING THEM TAKE THE LEAD) TO AVOID DAMAGE TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH EITHER GREECE OR TURKEY. THE GREEKS HAVE NOT RAISED OBJECTIONS IN THE NAC, AND THE EXERCISE IS THUS OFFICIALLY ON TRACK. ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL PANSA SOUGHT OUT THE GREEK PERMREP AUGUST 1 TO ASK ABOUT POSSIBLE GREEK OBJECTIONS TO THE EXERCISE, AND THE PERMREP PROMISED TO QUARY ATHENS. EVEN IF ATHENS MAKES NO FORMAL PROTEST AS A RESULT, WE ANTICIPATE THAT AS THE COMMENCEMENT DATE OF 12 SEPTEMBER APPROACHES, GREECE MAY

BECOME ANXIOUS OVER THIS EXERCISE, AND MAY RAISE STRONG LAST-MINUTE OBJECTIONS, CHANNELLING THESE PARTICULARLY AT THE U.S. MOREOVER, THE TIME FRAME FOR DEEP EXPRESS WILL GENERALLY COINCIDE WITH THE BEGINNING OF GREEK/NATO NEGOTIATIONS (WHICH WILL PROBABLY START AROUND SEPTEMBER 18), AS WELL AS A RESUMPTION OF OUR BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE. IT MAY ALSO COINCIDE WITH RESUMED ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS TO GAIN A CONGRESSIONAL

LIFTING OF THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO AND POSSIBLE FURTHER TURKISH MOVES AGAINST U.S. INSTALLATIONS.

4. THE MOST VISIBLE FEATURES OF DEEP EXPRESS WILL BE THE MOVEMENT TO TURKEY OF ACE MOBILE FORCE ELEMENTS, INCLUDING PARTICIPATION FROM ITALY, UK, THE NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM AND FRG, AS WELL AS THE US; AN AMPHIBIOUS LANDING SEPTEMBER 24, INVOLVING ALLIED (INCLUDING TURKISH) AS WELL AS US ELEMENTS IN TURKISH THRACE; AND NAVAL AND TACTICAL AIR SUPPORT MANEUVERS IN THE NORTHERN AEGEAN SEA, WHICH WILL INCLUDE ELEMENTS OF THE SIXTH FLEET.

5. THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL ASPECTS OF THE EXERCISE ARE LIKELY TO CENTER ON QUESTIONS OF AIR RIGHTS FOR THE ACE MOBILE FORCE TO ARRIVE IN THE AREA, AS WELL AS THE AEGEAN PORTIONS OF DEEP EXPRESS. INDIVIDUAL ALLIES WILL NEED TO OBTAIN FLIGHT CLEARANCES FROM GREECE, WHICH MAY BE DENIED; IF SO, THEY WILL NEED TO CIRCUMNAVIGATE THE GREEK FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION, WHICH WILL PROBABLY RECEIVE EMBAR-
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RASSING PUBLICITY AND MAY POSE PROBLEMS OF RANGE FOR CERTAIN ALLIED AIRCRAFT. WE ANTICIPATE GREEK CONCERN OVER TACTICAL AIR SUPPORT FOR MARITIME OPERATIONS (TASMO) IN THE AEGEAN, AS WELL AS GREEK SENSITIVITIES TO NAVAL MANEUVERS IN THIS AREA. (GREECE HAS REQUESTED THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS THAT TASMO BE ELIMINATED FROM THE EXERCISE OUT OF CONCERN THAT AIRCRAFT COULD NOT AVOID GREEK AIR SPACE IN THE AEGEAN. TURKEY HAS BEEN ADAMANT THAT TASMO BE RETAINED, AND HAS BEEN SUPPORTED BY SHAPE, WHICH HAS PLANNED ALL TASMO FLIGHTS TO AVOID ANY VIOLATION OF GREEK AIR SPACE BY KEEPING ALLIED AIRCRAFT TEN NAUTICAL MILES FROM GREEK TERRITORY.) WE ALSO EXPECT GREEK OPPOSITION TO ASPECTS OF THE EXERCISE'S COMMAND AND CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH INVOLVE CONTROL BY A TURKISH OFFICER. (TURKEY IS PRESSING FOR OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF AEGEAN NAVAL OPERATIONS BY COMEDNOREAST, A TURKISH ADMIRAL.) MORE GENERALLY, EVEN IF IT IS SATISFIED ON SPECIFIC OBJECTIONS, WE EXPECT GREECE TO SHOW INCREASING SENSITIVITY OVER THE IDEA OF A LARGE NATO EXERCISE, INCLUDING TURKISH FORCES, IN THIS AREA.

6. WE BELIEVE THAT TURKEY VIEWS THIS EXERCISE AS A WAY TO

ILLUSTRATE GRAPHICALLY THE DIFFICULTIES POSED FOR DEFENSE OPERATIONS IN NATO'S SOUTHEASTERN REGION BY GREECE'S ANOMALOUS STATUS IN NATO. TURKEY IS LIKELY TO MAINTAIN THIS STANCE, AND TO TAKE STRONG UMBRAGE AT ANY EFFORT TO CUT BACK ON ASPECTS OF THE EXERCISE OBJECTIONABLE TO GREECE; POSSIBLY WELCOMING A CHANCE TO MAKE OTHER ALLIES CHOOSE BETWEEN GREEK AND TURKISH INTERESTS.

7. COURSES OF ACTION. WE ENVISAGE THREE ALTERNATIVE COURSES IN THE WEEKS AHEAD.

A. THE U.S. COULD TAKE A LOW PROFILE ON THIS SUBJECT IN NATO, LETTING GREECE POSE FORMAL OBJECTIONS TO THE EXERCISE, ASKING FOR ITS CANCELLATION OR FOR SIGNIFICANT CHANGES. IF GREECE POSES OBJECTIONS AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL IN THE NAC, WE WOULD CONSULT WITH OTHER PARTICIPATING ALLIES, AND ENCOURAGE ONE OR MORE OF THEM TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SUPPORTING THE CASE FOR CHANGING THE EXERCISE -- SHOULD THAT COURSE BE DEEMED ADVISABLE. THIS COURSE
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WOULD MINIMIZE THE CHANCES OF A U.S. CONFRONTATION WITH TURKEY, AND WOULD PLACE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGING THE EXERCISE WITH THE GREEKS OR OTHERS, ALTHOUGH BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY WOULD WATCH OUR ACTIONS IN THE NAC AND ONE OF THE TWO WOULD BE OFFENDED. THE MAJOR DISADVANTAGE IS THAT, IF THE GREEKS SAY NOTHING AND THE EXERCISE PROCEEDS ON SCHEDULE, WE MAY BE FACED WITH A SHARP LAST-MINUTE GREEK REACTION, DAMAGING BOTH TO BILATERAL AND TO GREEK-NATO RELATIONS.

B. WE COULD WORK WITH OTHER ALLIES TO CANCEL THIS EXERCISE, SEEKING TO HAVE OTHER PARTICIPANTS JOIN WITH US IN ANY REQUEST FOR CANCELLATION, AND ARGUING OUR CASE ON THE BASIS OF AVOIDING UNDUE ALLIED ACTIVITIES IN AN OBVIOUSLY TENSE AREA. THE MAJOR DISADVANTAGE IS THAT WE WOULD PROBABLY BE SEEN BY OTHERS, INCLUDING TURKEY, AS TAKING THE LEAD IN CHANGING THE EXERCISE, AND THERE COULD BE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH TURKEY AND, INDEED, A TURKISH REACTION AGAINST NATO AS A WHOLE.

C. ALONG WITH OTHER PARTICIPATING ALLIES, WE COULD WORK TO SCALE BACK ASPECTS OF THIS EXERCISE WHICH ARE PARTICULARLY OBJECTIONABLE TO GREECE, ESPECIALLY TASMOS OPERATIONS. HERE AGAIN, WE WOULD PROBABLY BE SEEN BY TURKEY AS TAKING THE LEAD IN SUGGESTING THESE CHANGES, WITH THE RISK OF EXACERBATING TURKISH-U.S. AND TURKISH-NATO RELATIONS, AND GREECE COULD STILL HAVE A SHARP POLITICAL REACTION WHEN THE EXERCISE OCCURS.

8. RECOMMENDATION: IN LIGHT OF OUR-STRAINED BILATERAL

RELATIONS WITH TURKEY, AND SOME DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY
OVER TURKEY'S FUTURE WITHIN NATO AS A WHOLE, WE RECOMMEND
THE FIRST COURSE, I.E., LETTING EVENTS UNFOLD AND
COUNTING ON GREECE, IF IT WISHES, TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE
IN CALLING FOR ANY CHANGE IN THE EXERCISE.

AGREE WITH ALTERNATIVE A (TAKE A LOW PROFILE)

AGREE WITH ALTERNATIVE B (TAKE THE LEAD IN CANCELLING
THE EXERCISE)
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AGREE WITH ALTERNATIVE C (TAKE THE LEAD IN SCALING BACK
EXERCISE)

OTHER

CLEARED: PM:JGOODBY C:JKELLY

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